

REMARKS

This paper is responsive to the Office Action mailed November 28, 2007. Claims 1-3, 5-13, and 15 are pending in this application and currently stand rejected. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections are respectfully requested in view of the following remarks.

Claim Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. §103

Claims 1-3, 5-7, 9-12 and 15 are rejected under 35 U.S.C § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Hubis et al. (US Patent Number 6,343,324, "Hubis") in view of McIlroy et al. ("Multilevel security in the UNIX Tradition," "McIlroy"). Applicants respectfully disagree.

In its current form, independent claim 1 recites in part "said connection information definition block includes a logical volume connection information specification division in which a connected state value concerning the connection of said computer is specified in relation to each logical volume included in said disk device or each logical area in each logical volume included in said disk device." In one limitation, "the input/output execution control block appends an access key having a value to an input/output request to or from said disk device." In another limitation, "in the event that said access key value is equal to or smaller than said connected state value, input/output to or from said disk device is enabled." In yet another limitation, "in the event that said access key value is greater than said connected state value, input/output to or from said disk device is disabled." These limitations are not taught or suggested by any of the cited references, either alone or in combination.

As acknowledged by the Office Action, Hubis fails to teach the above-mentioned limitations. (Office Action, page 3). McIlroy, however, does not make up the defects of Hubis.

In general, McIlroy teaches a label that is used in security classification of files, processes, and pipes in a Unix system in order to support multi-level security. McIlroy states "[e]very file and every process has a label which tells its classification ... data transfers may only happen in a direction of increasing labels." Section 1, paragraph 2, lines 1-3. According to McIlroy, the ceiling is used to prevent processes from accessing sensitive places. For example, the process ceiling guards against intrusion by preventing uncleared users from obtaining access

to high security places. Every process or file system has a ceiling. Section 2, paragraph 1, lines 3-5. Thus, within one file system, a same ceiling value is used for each entity (e.g., a file, a pipe, a device, etc.) of the file system at a given time. Section 2.1, paragraph 1, lines 3-4. In sum, the ceiling is merely used to keep all transactions having a label below the ceiling within a particular file system or process.

Further, nowhere in McIlroy does it teach or suggest that the ceiling value is used to represent "a connected state value *concerning the connection* of said computer is specified *in relation to each logical volume*," (Emphasis added) as recited in claim 1. Thus, the ceiling disclosed in McIlroy is clearly different from "a connected state value *concerning the connection* of said computer is specified *in relation to each logical volume* included in said disk device or each logical area in each logical volume included in said disk device," as recited in claim 1.

At least for the reasons set forth above, the cited references, alone or in combination, fail to teach or suggest each and every limitation of claim 1. Thus, claim 1 is allowable over the cited references. As claims 3, 6, and 7 are ultimately dependent from claim 1, claims 3, 6, and 7 are also allowable over the cited references. Applicants respectfully request that the rejection with respect to claims 1, 3, 6, and 7 be withdrawn.

Independent claims 2, 9, 11, and 15 recite limitations that are similar to the limitations recited in claim 1. As discussed above with reference to claim 1, any of the cited references, alone or in combination, do not teach these limitations. Thus, claims 2, 9, 11, and 15 are also allowable over the cited references for at least the same reasons.

Claims 8 and 13 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Hubis and McIlroy in view of Tang et al. ("Load Distribution via Static Scheduling and Client Redirection for Replicated Web Servers," "Tang").

Claim 8 depends from claim 7 which is dependent from claim 1, and claim 13 depends from claim 11. The rejection of claims 8 and 13 is premised on the assertion that Hubis and McIlroy disclose the features recited in claim 1 and 11, and Tang discloses that remaining features of claim 8 and 13.

As discussed above, Hubis and McIlroy do not teach or suggest each and every feature recited in claims 1 and 11. As best understood, Tang does not provide any teaching or suggestion that would remedy this deficiency. Therefore, claims 8 and 13 are also allowable over the cited prior art. Thus, Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of the rejection of claim 8 and 13.

Accordingly, withdrawal of the rejection of claims 1-3, 5-13, and 15 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) is respectfully requested.

CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing, Applicants believe all claims now pending in this application are in condition for allowance and an action to that end is respectfully requested.

If the Examiner believes a telephone conference would expedite prosecution of this application, please telephone the undersigned at 206-467-9600.

Respectfully submitted,

Dated: February 6, 2008

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